

The Story of Creeks

How have we used creeks in the past? How do we use creeks today?

Look at these pictures of a creek in our area at three different times in history.

Mark the activities on the pictures with a letter from the Water Use Code.

For example, put an F for food source next to the people fishing. There are many correct answers.

Discuss how you came up with your answers.

WATER USE CODE

- | | |
|---|---|
| D Drinking and cooking water | P Power — saw mills , paper mills, water turbines |
| T Transportation | W Washing — clothes, bodies, dishes |
| R Recreation — play, sport | O Other needs — carrying materials or waste |
| F Food source — fish, livestock, irrigation | M Manufacturing — making products using water |

The native Ohlone people used the creeks of this area for more than 10,000 years. They built homes from tule that grew near creeks. They fished for salmon, collected shellfish, and washed in creeks. Nearby springs and streams that flowed into creeks provided drinking and cooking water.

Year 1750



In 1850 the County of Santa Cruz was officially created and the settlers set up businesses that used creeks for many things. Trees were turned into boards at the sawmill, and wood and water were made into paper in the paper mill. The factories used creeks to push waterwheels, mix, wash and to transport waste. The ranchers used creek water to feed their cows and irrigate their farms. People started using wells for drinking water because creeks were getting very dirty.

Year 1870



Some creek bottoms were dug deeper and the banks made higher in places to prevent flooding. Trees and bushes have been planted to reduce erosion. There are many businesses and houses next to creeks. Far upstream people pump water out of creeks for use in their houses. We still use creeks to wash away waste, such as storm water from streets.

Today

